

## ESF #13 – ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

### Participating Departments/Agencies:

Environmental Quality, Department of  
Health and Human Services  
Regulation and Licensure  
Agriculture, Department of  
Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)  
State Emergency Response Team (SERT)  
State Fire Marshal  
State Patrol  
Roads, Department of  
Game and Parks Commission  
Military Department  
University of Nebraska System  
Natural Resources, Department of

### I. GENERAL

It is essential to the quality of human life and economic and cultural health that the State achieves, maintains, and protects the quality of its water, land, and air. The Emergency Support Function (ESF) for environmental quality (ESF #13) provided hereafter is the plan by which State agencies will direct their resources and responses to protect human health, safety, and welfare and all other plants and animals through environmental quality.

### II. PURPOSE

The purpose of ESF #13 is to coordinate and define the appropriate State agency emergency efforts toward the prevention, containment, abatement, and cleanup of contamination of water, land, and air resources resulting from natural or manmade acts requiring the activation of the State Emergency Operations Plan (SEOP). State agencies participating in ESF #13 shall provide advice, expertise, and, to the extent possible, technical assistance in the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Nebraska and the environment.

### III. SITUATIONS and ASSUMPTIONS

#### A. Situations

1. A natural disaster or emergency incident that overwhelms local emergency responders may require State agency assistance. In addition to direct assistance, the State may be required to provide leadership and coordination

in carrying out emergency response efforts to minimize impacts to the public and environment. For Nebraska, the most probable events would likely arise due to weather (e.g., a series of tornadoes, major floods), climate (e.g., drought), fires, and/or significant releases of hazardous chemicals or petroleum.

2. Natural disasters can cause destruction of homes, industries, and other facilities in addition to potentially requiring evacuation and medical treatment of the populace. Following mitigation, assessments and cleanup are often necessary to prevent further detrimental effects to public health and the environment. Natural disasters can generate large amounts of debris, hazardous wastes, and contaminated soil that must be properly staged and disposed. Floods or other events can inundate or destroy publicly owned treatment plants, thereby directly discharging wastes into streams. Destructive storms or other disasters may require burning due to significant amounts of debris. Disposal of numerous animal carcasses may be needed as a result of a contagious animal disease (CAD) outbreak.
3. Chemical and industrial plant releases and/or fires, transportation accidents, and radioactive or biological material incidents must be immediately contained and mitigated. These incidents may also necessitate public alerts, evacuations or sheltering-in-place, and/or alerting downstream water users. Once these incidents are controlled and cleanup begins, contaminated materials must be properly managed and disposed, possibly followed by environmental and ecological assessments.

#### B. Assumptions

1. Response to natural disasters, manmade events, and emergencies (all three terms are hereafter referred to as an "event") may involve numerous local, State, federal, and private agencies. No single local or State agency has full authority and expertise to act unilaterally.
2. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is the primary State agency for response to environmental concerns resulting from natural disasters and hazardous chemical releases and will also assist with the following ESFs.

FUNCTION	ESF#
Public Works	3
Fire Suppression	4
Informational Planning	5
Health and Human Services	8
Agriculture	11
Weapons Of Mass Destruction	14
Recovery	15

3. Health and Human Services Systems - Regulation and Licensure is the

primary State agency for coordinating responses to human biohazard and radiological events, ESF #8, Appendices 2 and 3, respectively.

- a. Releases of radioactive material from fixed facilities will follow the Nebraska Radiological Emergency Response Plan for Nuclear Power Plant Incidents.
- b. See ESF #8, Appendix 3 for radiological transportation incidents.
4. Department of Agriculture is the primary State agency for coordinating responses to (CAD) outbreaks and will follow ESF #11, Appendix 1.
5. Terrorism events involving chemicals, biologicals, radiologicals and other weapons of mass destruction will follow the Terrorism Annex, ESF #14.
6. Full cooperation of local governments and other agencies to cope with an event is assumed.
7. Up-to-date local emergency operations plans (LEOPs) and other related plans (e.g., Omaha/Council Bluffs Sub-Area Plan) are assumed to be in existence at the local government level, and a current local emergency planning committee (LEPC) contact list is available at the State level.
8. DEQ might enter into an Integrated or Unified Command System with federal agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or Fish and Wildlife, should they respond with equipment and resources to an event.

#### IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS/ACTIVATION for DEQ

##### A. Department of Environmental Quality

1. Typically, when the responsible party, public or other governmental agency report an event to DEQ, Release Assessment (RA) personnel will immediately attempt to identify the party responsible and invoke its regulatory authorities. The responsible party is directed to contain and mitigate the release, appropriately dispose of any wastes, and conduct any necessary environmental assessment. EPA will be requested to assist when the responsible party cannot be identified and/or the event is beyond the resources and/or capabilities of the responsible party's contractor, local government, and the State.
2. Other than the Lincoln office, DEQ has field offices located in Omaha, Norfolk, Holdrege, North Platte, Scottsbluff, and Chadron (see Attachment 1 - Field Office Region Map). Event notifications should be made directly to the Lincoln office where the Release Assessment Coordinator (RAC) and Release Assessment (RA) responders are located. After work hours, weekends, and holidays, notifications are made to the Lincoln Dispatch

Office of the Nebraska State Patrol who then pages a DEQ RA responder. Should a governmental agency or the public contact one of the field offices to report an event, field office staff is either to direct the call to or immediately notify the Lincoln DEQ office after collecting the necessary information.

3. The RAC is responsible for assessing the level of immediate response desired of DEQ personnel, coordinating response activities, and communicating with responsible parties, local government, and other appropriate agencies as necessary.
  - a. In support of ESF #13, the DEQ Deputy Director of Programs or designated alternate will serve as the Emergency Support Function Coordinator (ESFC) at the NEMA Emergency Operation Center (EOC).
  - b. When a significant event occurs, the RAC will immediately notify the DEQ's ESFC or designee. The RAC will then notify NEMA if appropriate.
  - c. NEMA will immediately consult with DEQ, HHSS, and/or Agriculture on the need to activate ESF #13.
  - d. NEMA will immediately notify DEQ upon activation of ESF #13.
  - e. When ESF #13 is activated, the ESFC and RAC will identify, activate, and alert the appropriate DEQ sections.
  - f. The ESFC will report to the NEMA Emergency Operation Center (EOC), and the RAC will alert or request response and/or assistance by local, State and/or federal agencies as necessary.

B. Health and Human Services Systems

See ESF #8 – Concept of Operations/Activation

C. Department of Agriculture

See ESF #11 – Concept of Operations

V. ORGANIZATIONAL ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Department of Environmental Quality

1. When ESF #13 is activated, the following operational requests may be made of the RAC, RA responders, and/or other DEQ personnel. The extent of the response will vary depending on the scope of the event and the resources that are available with which to respond.

- a. Respond to the scene, inform Incident Commander (IC) of arrival, and work within the Incident Command System (ICS). Tasks performed will not exceed the scope of Operations Level as described in 29 CFR 1910.120 (OSHA HAZWOPER).
- b. After assessing the incident scene, provide technical guidance to the IC concerning immediate response actions in order to minimize threat and impact to public health and safety and the environment.
- c. Following consultation with the IC and/or local agencies, provide through NEMA/DEQ/HHSS/Agriculture public information officers (PIOs), as necessary, any recommendations concerning what immediate actions the public should take in order to further minimize threat and impact to public health and safety.
- d. Notify adjacent and downstream water users/states of potential or actual contamination as necessary.
- e. Notify adjacent and downwind county LEPCs/states of potential or actual airborne contaminant plumes as necessary.
- f. Determine the need for technical assistance from other agencies or activation of the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) in accordance with the Nebraska Hazardous Materials Response Plan.
- g. Activate the federal Regional Response Team as per the EPA Region 7 Response Plan when necessary.
- h. Share with other agencies any available environmental and/or facility information critical to response actions.
- i. Provide consultation for short- and long-term cleanup of the environment.
- j. Collect environmental samples for analysis as allowed by equipment resources/training within those areas that require, at a maximum, Level D personal protection equipment (PPE).
- k. Assess damage to waste water treatment plants.
- l. Provide access to State Revolving Fund (SRF) grants and loans for repair and replacement of damaged/destroyed publicly owned wastewater treatment plants.
- m. Provide technical guidance concerning appropriate disposal of debris, wastes, and contaminated materials, the siting of staging areas and locating, and permanent disposal sites.

- 1) Following the event, coordinate household hazardous waste

collection with appropriate agencies.

- 2) Accept grant requests from political subdivisions for cleanup of waste dumped along public roadways.
- n. Following consultation with local and State agencies, determine if environmental variances or waivers are necessary due to the scope of the event. Such waivers may include, but are not limited to, disposal, open and incinerator burning, application of mitigation materials (e.g., surfactants), *in situ* burning of petroleum, and waste water treatment plant bypasses.
- o. Assist Game and Parks Commission with environmental damage and ecological assessments of streams, lakes, parks, and environmentally sensitive areas.
- p. Provide, either directly or in concert with HHSS and/or NEMA, press releases to the media and public concerning environmental and public health recovery actions.
- q. Direct, track, and coordinate with other agencies, as necessary, monies granted by federal agencies (e.g., EPA) for environmental cleanup and recovery.

#### B. Health and Human Services Systems

1. Provide overall coordination, leadership, assessment, and technical assistance for public health needs for potential or actual events including radiological and human biohazard incidents.
2. Determine short- and long-term health effects posed by radiological, biological or chemical events and coordinate with State PIOs the release of such information to the media and public.
3. Determine the potability of drinking water supplies and identify other drinking water sources.
4. Provide mental health support to survivors, emergency responders, those that suffer significant property loss (e.g., flood and tornado victims, owners of livestock lost to CAD), and the public in general to prevent or minimize stress, grief, and depression that occur following events.
5. Provide laboratory analytical support.

#### C. Department of Agriculture

1. Provide overall coordination, leadership, assessment and technical assistance in response to a potential or actual outbreak of CAD.

2. Provide support agencies with current information concerning locations of the CAD outbreak and the number of animals involved in addition to coordinating such information with State PIOs for press releases to the media and public.
3. Provide support agencies, livestock owners, media and the public with general decontamination information and locations of decontamination centers.

D. Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)

1. Consult with DEQ, HHSS, and/or Agriculture about activation of ESF #13 and coordinate response by State agencies to events.
2. Obtain and maintain monitoring equipment for radiation hazard detection and exposure control.
3. Coordinate damage assessment teams to determine event effects on individuals and businesses within the impacted area.
4. Coordinate air transportation to event areas for State agency key personnel/emergency workers when ESF #13 has been activated.
5. Keep response agencies apprised of what is transpiring as the incident response evolves and share any information that is beneficial to response actions.
6. In concert with other State agency PIOs, prepare press releases to the media and general public to apprise of response actions taken, actions the public should take, and recovery activities.

E. State Emergency Response Team (SERT)

The purpose of the State Emergency Response Team is to respond to transportation and facility related events occurring within the State in order to protect life, property, and the environment. The SERT is comprised of personnel from DEQ and volunteers from the State Patrol and State Fire Marshal. Other than DEQ personnel, many of the responders are equipped with Level B totally encapsulating suits, self-contained breathing apparatuses (SCBAs), and radiological monitoring equipment. All responders have access to limited types of air monitoring equipment. See the Nebraska Hazardous Materials Response Plan for activation of SERT members.

1. Respond to potential or actual events involving hazardous substances and operate within the ICS as determined by the IC until the situation is stabilized and/or mitigated and the IC releases the team.
2. Provide on-site technical assistance to stabilize and control a hazardous

situation within the limits of available resources and training until other private or government resources become available.

F. State Fire Marshal

1. Respond to potential or actual fire and explosion events and provide technical assistance to the IC.
2. Inspect and/or investigate damage resulting from an event to building structures and petroleum and hazardous substance storage vessels (e.g., above and underground storage tanks).
3. Investigate the possibility of arson.
4. Share with other agencies any available environmental and/or facility information critical to response actions.
5. Provide, either directly or in concert with NEMA, press releases to the media and public concerning public safety issues.

G. State Patrol

1. Supplement local law enforcement and/or Nebraska National Guard efforts to protect public safety and property during an event.
2. Direct movement of traffic away from and around areas threatened or impacted by an event.
3. Continuously apprise NEMA of road access into the event zone(s) when ESF #13 is activated.
4. Investigate the event scene if a crime is suspected.

H. Department of Roads

1. Apprise NEMA and other responding State agencies of road access into the event zone(s) when ESF #13 is activated.
2. Set up signs and barricade State roads and assist and/or supplement local government in doing the same around the event zone(s).
3. Perform damage assessments, structural evaluations, and emergency repairs to public facilities and provide heavy equipment and resources for clearing debris.

I. Game and Parks Commission

1. Supplement local law enforcement, State Patrol and/or Nebraska National



Guard efforts to protect public safety and property during an event.

2. Respond to fish kills either directly or in concert with DEQ personnel.
3. Conduct environmental and ecological assessments along impacted streams and in State parks and recreation areas in concert with DEQ personnel.
4. Provide boat transportation to coordinating State agencies for necessary response actions.
5. Coordinate with other agencies in response to CAD outbreaks as outlined in ESF #11, Appendix 1.

J. Military Department

1. Rescue, evacuate, and transport casualties resulting from an event, and safeguard public health.
2. Restore, on an emergency basis, essential services (firefighting, water, communications, transportation, power, and fuel).
3. Clear debris and rubble.
4. Monitor radiological, chemical, and biological effects, and control contaminated areas.
5. Plan for and control roadway movement.
6. Perform damage assessment.
7. Provide, either directly or in concert with NEMA, press releases to the media and public concerning public safety issues.

K. University of Nebraska System

1. Provide support and technical expertise of health matters related to agricultural and human exposures.
2. Provide analytical and consultation services using resources available within the University System.

L. Natural Resources, Department of

1. Inspect and/or provide technical assistance concerning dam safety.
2. Provide floodplain maps to support agencies and assist in mapping field information and providing locational equipment (i.e., GPS units).

3. Provide support agencies with locations of registered domestic and municipal drinking water wells and irrigation and industrial wells.

## VI. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

ESF #13 will utilize personnel and resources from the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, Health and Human Services and/or Nebraska Department of Agriculture to respond to mission assignments related to events. Additional resources available from other ESFs may be coordinated and mobilized to support ESF #13 missions. When requests exceed the state's capability to respond, mobilization of additional resources (i.e., federal resources) will be requested. All State personnel and resources mobilized by ESF #13 will remain under the direction and control of the ESFC #13, unless otherwise designated.

## VII. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

DEQ exercises its authorities and duties in accordance with the following list of promulgated rules and regulations. The rules and regulations are provided as a reminder that DEQ will have to be consulted should it be necessary to consider environmental waivers or variances as a result of event response activities.

### A. Authorities

1. Title 117 – Nebraska Surface Water Quality Standards
2. Title 118 – Ground Water Quality Standards and Use Classification
3. Title 119 – Rules and Regulations Pertaining to the Issuance of Permits Under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
4. Title 120 – Rules in 401 (1)a Certification
5. Title 121 – Effluent Guidelines and Standards
6. Title 122 – Rules and Regulations for Underground Injections and Mineral Production Wells
7. Title 123 – Rules and Regulations for Design, Operation and Maintenance of Wastewater Treatment Works
8. Title 124 – Rules and Regulations for Design, Operation and Maintenance of On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems
9. Title 126 – Rules and Regulations Pertaining to the Management of Wastes
10. Title 127 – Rules and Regulations Governing the Nebraska Pretreatment

## Program

11. Title 128 – Nebraska Hazardous Waste Regulations
12. Title 129 – Nebraska Air Quality Regulations
13. Title 130 – Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Livestock Waste Control
14. Title 131 – Rules and Regulations for the Wastewater Treatment Facilities and Drinking Water Construction Assistance
15. Title 132 – Integrated Solid Waste Management Regulations
16. Title 133 – Litter Reduction and Recycling Grant Program
17. Title 135 – Rules and Regulations for Mineral Exploration Holes
18. Title 136 – Scrap Tire Management Rules and Regulations
19. Title 194 – Rules and Regulations for the Disposal of Low-Level Radioactive Waste
20. Title 195 – Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Chemigation
21. Title 196 – Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Special Protection Areas
22. Title 197 – Rules and Regulations for the Certification of Wastewater Treatment Operators in Nebraska
23. Title 198 – Rules and Regulations Pertaining to Agricultural Chemical Containment
24. Title 199 – Waste Reduction and Recycling Incentive Grants Program
25. Title 200 – Petroleum Release Remedial Action Reimbursement Fund

## B. References

1. Nebraska State Emergency Response Team Hazardous Materials Response Plan (NEMA, June 1993)
2. Nebraska Radiological Emergency Response Plan for Nuclear Power Plant Incidents (NEMA, April 2001)
3. Omaha/Council Bluffs Sub-Area Contingency Plan (EPA Region 7, March 2003)
4. Spill Contingency Handbook Missouri River From Blair, Nebraska to

Plattsmouth, Nebraska (EPA /TS-CRD-94/95CO702, June 1995)

5. State of Nebraska Emergency Operations Plan (March 2003)
6. Inland Area Contingency Plan Region VII (EPA/540/R-97/005, December 1996)
7. Federal Response Plan 9230.1-PL (April 1999)

#### LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT	ITEM	PAGE
1	DEQ Field Office Sites	ESF 13-13

## NEBRASKA SEOP



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